

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1-14. (Canceled)

15. (New) An assembly support designed for fastening to a body shell of a vehicle door of a passenger vehicle equipped with a locking system comprising:  
a lock unit of the locking system fastened to the assembly support, and  
an outside actuating unit of the locking system coupled to the lock unit via an operative connection,

wherein the assembly support, when fastened to the body shell, closes an installation opening left open on the body shell, and

wherein the outside actuating unit is fastened to at least one of the assembly support and the lock unit.

16. (New) The assembly support as claimed in claim 15, wherein the outside actuating unit is designed in such a manner that, with the assembly support fastened to the body shell, an outside door handle of the locking system can be fastened from an outer side of the vehicle door through an outer skin of the body shell to the outside actuating unit.

17. (New) The assembly support as claimed in claim 15, wherein the lock unit is fastened to the assembly support by way of a first adaptor.

18. (New) The assembly support as claimed in claim 15, wherein the

outside actuating unit is fastened to the at least one of the assembly support and the lock unit by way of a second adaptor.

19. (New) The assembly support as claimed in claim 15, wherein a fastening of the lock unit to the assembly support and/or of the outside actuating unit to the assembly support and/or to the lock unit permits positioning of at least one of the lock unit and the outside actuating unit within a predetermined range of tolerances.

20. (New) The assembly support as claimed in claim 15, wherein functionality of the lock unit, the outside actuating unit and the operative connection is tested and adjusted when the assembly support is finished and has not yet been fitted into the vehicle door.

21. (New) The assembly support as claimed in claim 16, wherein the lock unit is fastened to the assembly support by way of a first adaptor.

22. (New) The assembly support as claimed in claim 16, wherein the outside actuating unit is fastened to the at least one of the assembly support and the lock unit by way of a second adaptor.

23. (New) The assembly support as claimed in claim 16, wherein a fastening of the lock unit to the assembly support and/or of the outside actuating

unit to the assembly support and/or to the lock unit permits positioning of at least one of the lock unit and the outside actuating unit within a predetermined range of tolerances.

24. (New) The assembly support as claimed in claim 16, wherein functionality of the lock unit, the outside actuating unit and the operative connection is tested and adjusted when the assembly support is finished and has not yet been fitted into the vehicle door.

25. (New) A method for assembling a vehicle door of a passenger vehicle equipped with a locking system, comprising:

fastening a lock unit of the locking system to an assembly support and an outside actuating unit of the locking system to at least one of the assembly support and the lock unit and coupling the lock unit to the outside actuating unit by way of an operative connection,

adjusting and testing the mounted locking system,

fitting the assembly support into a body shell of the vehicle door in such a manner that the assembly support closes an installation opening of the body shell, and

attaching an outside door handle of the locking system to the outside actuating unit from an outer side of the vehicle door through an outer skin of the body shell.

26. (New) The method as claimed in claim 25, wherein a reference outside door handle is used for adjusting and testing the locking system while, with the assembly support fitted into the body shell, a standard outside door handle is used for attaching to the outside actuating unit.

27. (New) The method as claimed in claim 25, wherein, when the lock unit is fastened to the assembly support and/or the outside actuating unit is fastened to at least one of the assembly support and the lock unit, a rough positioning of the lock unit and the outside actuating device takes place, while, when the assembly support is fitted into the body shell, a fine positioning of the lock unit and the outside actuating unit takes place.

28. (New) The method as claimed in claim 25, wherein the lock unit and the outside actuating unit are transferred in each case into a reference position for adjustment and testing.

29. (New) The method as claimed in claim 28, wherein, for adjustment and testing, use is made of an adjusting and testing device which permits an alignment of the lock unit and of the outside actuating unit in their reference positions.

30. (New) The method as claimed in claim 25, wherein at least one of the lock unit and the outside actuating unit is additionally fastened to the body shell

when the assembly support is fitted into the body shell.

31. (New) The method as claimed in claim 25, wherein the adjustment and testing of the locking system takes place during a preassembly process of the assembly support while fitting of the assembly support and attaching of the outside door handle take place during a final installation which is independent or temporally and/or locally decoupled from the preassembly process.

32. (New) An adjusting and testing device for carrying out the method as claimed in claim 29, wherein aligning elements align the lock unit and the outside actuating unit in their reference positions.

33. (New) The method as claimed in claim 26, wherein, when the lock unit is fastened to the assembly support and/or the outside actuating unit is fastened to at least one of the assembly support and the lock unit, a rough positioning of the lock unit and the outside actuating device takes place, while, when the assembly support is fitted into the body shell, a fine positioning of the lock unit and the outside actuating unit takes place.

34. (New) The method as claimed in claim 26, wherein the lock unit and the outside actuating unit are transferred in each case into a reference position for adjustment and testing.